

No demand, no supply

Raising awareness and reducing demand

Due to the elitist yet hidden nature of rhino-horn consumption in Vietnam, conducted for diverse reasons such as to cure cancer or as a hangover tonic, it is immensely difficult to even access consumers, let alone change the views of those whose money and power renders them unanswerable to the rest of society.

Louise Cotrel Gibbons | Wildlife Trade Programme Advisor, Education for Nature Vietnam

This is a challenge that local organisation Education for Nature – Vietnam (ENV) readily accepts, deploying a number of educational and communicative strategies aimed at permeating the world of consumers and potential consumers, including their home, workplace and leisure spaces, to such an extent that the notion of rhino-horn consumption becomes unthinkable.

The simplest way to reach millions of people is via television. ENV has produced three rhino-focused public service announcements that take various approaches, including falsifying the beliefs in the medical/status value of rhino horn and presenting the truth about the origins of rhino horn through graphic footage of a dying rhino. Each film has been aired free-of-charge by over 60 channels nationwide and through various social media channels.

Media exposure in Vietnam for rhino horn issues has also greatly increased over the last year as a result of the coverage of

ENV's trip to South Africa. In September 2013, ENV took a delegation of Vietnamese celebrities, journalists and officials to South Africa, to see first-hand the impact of Vietnamese consumption of rhino horn, and most importantly to bring their experiences and learning back to the Vietnamese public. On their return to Hanoi, the delegates have become long-term 'Rhino Ambassadors', sharing their stories through their social media channels, numerous articles and television features, and a high-profile press conference. This September, ENV will take another group of well-known figures, including a popular singer, a prominent journalist and a high-profile CEO, back to South Africa.

ENV is continually developing targeted campaigns that aim to disassociate social status with rhino horn consumption, such as displaying banners in government offices and office buildings, and hosting interactive rhino-focused public events in luxury locations like expensive entertainment centres, during which visitors are able to learn more and share their thoughts about rhino horn consumption. The Vincom group of 'mega malls', along with BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai, Toyota, MG and premier fitness centres NShape Fitness and Club M are supporting ENV in our 'win-win' campaign, displaying materials that present the idea that smart, stylish, or healthy people do not consume rhino horn, but drive a luxury car, go to the gym, or buy new clothes instead.

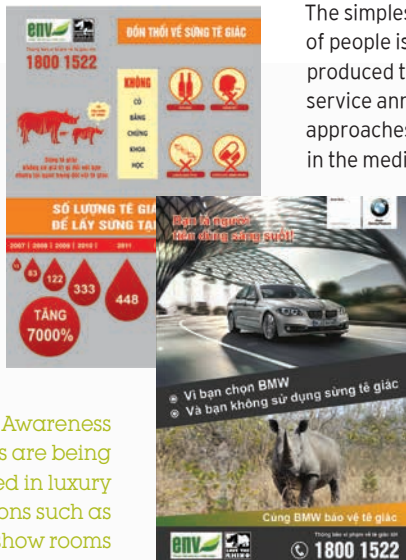
“Rhino horn has no value to you but it is very important to rhinos, so let's work together to protect them!” *Ha Van Vu (26), visitor to ENV's public event in Hanoi in August 2014.*

This approach therefore appeals to the status-driven consumerist nature of the rhino-horn consumers, associating well-known brands with wildlife protection and contradicting the perception of rhino horn as a status symbol. ENV plans to further extend this campaign to other expensive locations, such as golf and tennis clubs.

ENV's dedicated team of staff and volunteers are battling every day to challenge rhino horn consumption, joined by a growing base of supporters in the media, government, and business world who also want to ensure that the demand for rhino horn is eliminated. As messages reach into homes, workplaces, and leisure spaces across the country, ENV hopes that beliefs will be challenged and attitudes will be changed, tipping the scales back in favour of the rhino before it is too late.

Grants

Save the Rhino made a grant of £16,280, which included a donation of €2,500 from Zoo de la Barben, to ENV in March 2014 for its campaigning work this year.



Awareness banners are being placed in luxury locations such as car show rooms

